

Community News

Astronauts to sign autographs during August blood drive

By Amy Mendez

Astronauts will be signing autographs for those who give the gift of life at the next on-site blood drive.

Donors may give blood from 8:00 a.m.-noon Tuesday, Aug. 12 or 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Wednesday Aug. 13 in Teague Auditorium. Appointments are necessary only if employees plan on donating platelets or plasma. Appointments are not necessary for whole blood donations.

In addition to astronaut autographs, donors will receive a T-shirt or an insulated mug as a "thank you" gift for their donation.

But, the biggest thank you comes from a JSC employee who is undergoing several surgeries this month.

"I've used several units last month," said Heidi Glaisyer, who suffers from a kidney illness. "It's the kindness of people at JSC that keep people like me alive. Their 15 minute effort literally means life or death to someone like me. I am so thankful for each and every one of them.

"Just think, with 15 minutes you can save a life. Isn't that amazing? I know that when I go to get my blood, it may include some from JSC—it's reassuring to know that it is there in my time of need and that JSC folks made it possible. I owe someone out there my life," Glaisyer said.

Generally, donors can give blood every eight weeks. In some cases employees may be deferred if, for example, their blood is low in iron or they are on certain medications. Employees who have questions about how a medical condition may affect their ability to give blood can call St. Luke's Blood Donor

Center at 713-791-4483.

The process starts with a blood sample. Afterwards, one pint of blood is drawn. The actual collection of blood usually takes seven to 10 minutes, with the whole process taking approximately 30 to 45 minutes under normal circumstances. Donated blood undergoes several tests, including the tests for hepatitis and HIV. If there are reactive test results, donors are notified by mail. All results are kept confidential.

Usually there are no negative reactions to giving blood, but trained personnel are available in case employees become light-headed.

St. Lukes provides blood assurance coverage for all JSC personnel and their immediate families under the St. Luke's agreement with NASA and NASA contractors. Coverage includes all fees associated with blood products for blood transfused in any Houston area hospital. An immediate family member is considered to be the spouse of an employee, any dependent children, and the parents of the employee and spouse.

A single parent receives coverage for all tax dependent children and the employees parents. Single employees who are unmarried and without children receive coverage for themselves, their parents and any tax-dependent siblings of their parents.

As an additional benefit to donors, approximately three to four weeks after each donation, St. Luke's will send a card with information about blood group, type and cholesterol level.

For more information about JSC's on-site blood drive call Amy Mendez at x32604.



Photo courtesy Johnson Engineering

Johnson Engineering is stepping up its commitment to make JSC a safer place to work with the purchase of bicycle helmets for the Flight Crew System Development Contract employees.

Johnson Engineering moves 'ahead' in safety

Flight Crew employees receive bicycle helmets

By Marilyn Tellier

Johnson Engineering is stepping up its commitment to make JSC a safer place to work.

The company recently purchased bicycle helmets for the Flight Crew System Development Contract employees who ride bicycles on-site at JSC.

Forty-two Flight Crew System Development employees—NASA, Johnson Engineering and Lockheed—frequently ride bicycles on-site from building to building.

No Texas state law exists mandating that all bicycle operators wear a helmet, but Johnson's safety-conscious President, Tom Short, was insistent that, "any employee riding a bicycle must wear a helmet."

Margaret McPhail, Johnson project engineer, has worn a bicycle helmet for more than twenty years.

"I have always been aware of the importance of wearing a bike helmet," McPhail said. "You can break almost any bone in your body and it will heal, but brain damage is not something that can easily be fixed, if at all."

Jack Rainbolt, safety director for Johnson, along with Chuck Barbour, occupational safety and health specialist, oversaw the selection and distribution of the new helmets, which are lightweight (fabricated of styrofoam with a thin plastic coating), and approved by the American National Standards Institute and the American Society for Testing and Materials.

In order to receive one of the company-supplied helmets, a mandatory bicycle safety course, taught by Barbour, must be completed. The class covers correct hand

signal positions, proper cycling etiquette, rules of safe operation, Houston traffic code rules and the proper positioning and fitting of a helmet.

According to the Johns Hopkins Injury Prevention Center, over 900 bicyclists are killed in the U.S. each year, with 70 to 80 percent of these attributed to head injuries. The Journal of the American Medical Association reports that, "universal use of helmets by all bicyclists could have prevented as many as 2,500 deaths and 757,000 head injuries, i.e., one death every day and one head injury every four minutes."

An article published in the New England Journal of Medicine (May 1989) reports on a case-control study that was conducted on bicycle accident victims that had suffered head trauma. The results of this study revealed that accident victims who wore helmets had an 85 percent reduction in risk of head injuries, and an 88 percent reduction in risk of brain injury. Although these three reports have varying statistics, they all agree on one thing—wearing a bicycle helmet can save a life.

The Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute maintains that helmets, not involved in an accident, should be replaced every five years due to natural deterioration, wear and abuse. If a helmet has been involved in an accident, the Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute recommends replacement of the helmet after any crash where the helmet hit a surface. The foam part of a helmet is made for one-time use, and damage reduces protection even if it still looks intact. If there are marks or measurable foam crush, the Institute recommends replacing the helmet."

College registration under way for satellite, campus classes

JSC employees can now register for college courses for the fall semester.

Graduate courses are available via television instruction from the University of Houston Cullen College of Engineering. Employees also may attend the satellite campus of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University that will offer courses towards a two-year bachelor of science degree.

Employees can register for the Cullen College courses by voice mail until Aug. 6 with fees due Aug. 25. Courses in computer architecture, materials handling and operational research and analysis of systems will be offered and classes will be held in Bldg. 45 via instructional television. Employees also can register for industrial and mechanical engineering courses that will be held at University of Houston Clear Lake.

For more information call the Cullen College of Engineering at 713-743-4200.

Employees may register for the first

semester of the Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University satellite campus classes until Aug. 8.

Jointly sponsored by the Human Resources Development Branch and the Aircraft Operations Division of the Flight Crew Operations Directorate, these classes apply to one of two degree programs which ERAU will offer—bachelor of science in aviation maintenance management and/or bachelor of science in professional aeronautics. Classes will begin the week of Aug. 11 and will be held at Ellington Field.

Employees can register for courses in aviation regulations, organizational behavior and business law. Employees can register by calling Larry Powers at x49456.

JSC civil service employees can submit a JSC Form 75, Application for Training, for payment of these classes. For more information on either program call Kazuko Hall-Farley at x33075.

Ballunar liftoff, open house seeking help

Coordinators for the 1997 Ballunar Liftoff Festival are seeking volunteers for a variety of activities during the three-day event.

The Ballunar Festival, held during JSC's open house, will start on Friday, Aug. 22 and run through Sunday, Aug. 24. During both events, JSC will be transformed into the Ballunar Liftoff Festival "Headquarters". The festival will feature hot air balloon competitions, evening balloon glows, skydiving exhibitions, commercial exhibits, concession booths, arts and crafts exhibits, entertainment from local performing arts groups and various aviation equipment displays around the center.

Volunteers are needed for both

the Ballunar Festival and the open house. Ballunar Festival volunteers are needed for midway ticket sales,



entrance gates and crowd control personnel and to staff a variety of booths including chair rental and beverage sales. Volunteers also are needed to help balloon crews and for Metro park and ride sales. Three hour shifts are available and volunteers who work more than one shift will be entered in a drawing. Individuals may volunteer until Aug. 8. For information call the Clear Lake Area Chamber of Commerce Director of

Volunteers at 281-488-7676.

JSC volunteers also are needed and employees can call Kacy Carraway at x35045.

JSC Safety Alert

General fire hazard alert

What Happened

Within the past year, there have been several incidents where the potential for fire existed:

- Monitors (Sceptre and Three I, 17-inch) that began smoking while in use.
- Faulty personal electrical appliances.
- Paper or transparencies jammed in copying machines or printers.
- Commercial off-the-shelf equipment used other than for its intended purpose and without proper safety evaluations.

What You Can Do

If you have a Sceptre or a Three I, 17-inch monitor, turn off your computer and monitor:

- During extended absences from your workstation.
- During non-duty hours (nights, weekends, holidays).

If your monitor, computer, keyboard, printer (at a workstation) or plotter begins to smoke, shut it off immediately, and disconnect the power supply to your computer. Then, report the problem to the Emergency Operations Center, x33333, which will dispatch an emergency responder to your location. Call the Information Systems Directorate Center, at x34800, to report the faulty equipment.

If you notice a smoking copier or printer notify the EOC immediately. Then, immediately contact the key operator for the copier or the responsible person for the printer.

If any personal appliance or any other equipment begins smoking:

- Disconnect or remove power from defective equipment immediately.
- Notify the EOC immediately.
- Notify the person(s) responsible for the appliance or equipment as soon as possible.
- Remove ALL defective personal appliances from site.

For commercial off-the-shelf items, follow the manufacturer's recommendations for repair or the industry's standards. For modified commercial off-the-shelf equipment or JSC or NASA-approved manufactured equipment, follow established standards for repair.